

were not at all mutilated. Is it a fact, as generally believed, that a vulture is not considered fit for consumption by carnivores—even by its own kind which normally stop at nothing?

GUJARAT NATURAL HISTORY

SOCIETY,

HARI NARAYAN G. ACHARYA

AHMEDABAD,

16th April, 1950.

13. A BRIEF SUMMARY ON THE CHUKAR PARTRIDGE IN NEVADA, U. S. AMERICA.

The earliest known introduction of the Chukar Partridge (*Alectoris graeca* sp.) into the United States was in 1893 from Karachi, India; however, it was approximately 1935 before the bird was introduced into Nevada, in hopes that it could establish itself as a favourable upland game species.

From the period of 1935 through 1941 the Nevada State Fish and Game Commission had purchased and distributed approximately 775 chukars throughout the State. These plantings have been supplemented to an unknown extent through releases made by private individuals, and by County Sportsmen projects. Unfortunately, no reliable data concerning these latter releases can be obtained. According to the State Fish and Game the number of failures from the initial introductions appeared to be greater than those which resulted in established populations. By 1947, however, the remaining birds from the initial plant had increased in population sufficiently to warrant a short hunting season, and the resistance of the chukar to hunting pressure has enabled us to have seasons in 1948 and 1949 also.

The state of Nevada contains a preponderance of semi-arid land, broken up by innumerable brush-covered mountains, which seem to offer an excellent environment for the chukar. The part of the state in which the species seems to thrive best is at the higher elevations, where the valley floor is usually above 4,000 feet, and the chukar is especially adaptable to rough, mountainous areas where there are rocky hillsides, or steep tallus slopes, in combination with an available water supply. In addition the chukar seems to thrive well on a diet of our native vegetation, and is doing well in a variety of vegetational types.

Since 1947, the State has purchased an additional 100 birds for distribution, and has also been transplanting wild trapped birds to new areas. In addition, the State also purchased 70 pairs of chukar brood stock in February 1950, in an effort to raise birds which may be planted in areas where there has been no establishment. The pen-reared birds are to be released with wild-trapped birds in hopes that this method will reduce mortality, and provide for a higher rate of establishment.

The chukar is fast becoming one of the sportsmen's favourite game birds in Nevada. It is considerably smaller than our native Sage Grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) however, due to the elusive and wary characteristics of the chukar when subject to hunting pressure, and to its excellent table qualities, it is providing the hunter with a great deal of sport.

In conclusion, it can be said that the chukar is now well established, and extending its range in Nevada, and that due to its excellent qualities as a game bird extensive efforts are being made to increase its population.

UNIVERSITY STATION,
RENO, NEVADA,
27th March, 1950.

GLEN C. CHRISTENSEN

[In reply to our enquiry Mr. Christensen writes that there is no available data as to the number of Chukar which have been shot. According to his latest estimate he says that less than 3,000 birds have been introduced into the States but since the time of the first introduction around 1935 there has been a considerable increase in the population and a great increase in its range. No census has been taken of the Chukar population but field observations show that they are definitely breeding in the wild.

The *Auk* for July 1950 contains a Report of the American Ornithologists' Union Committee on Bird Protection for 1949 which reads in part—

'The drastic widespread decline in pheasant populations, plus success of the Chukar Partridge, *Alectoris*, in establishing itself in Nevada and other western states, has stimulated interest in the introduction of additional exotic game birds. Most biologists, aware of the often disastrous results of successful efforts, question such activities. Efforts are being made to channel all introductions through the Fish and Wildlife Service and secure careful advance information before attempts are made.'

—Eds.]

14. OCCURRENCE OF THE WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN [*CHLIDONIAS LEUCOPTERUS* (TEMME)] IN BOMBAY

On 26th March 1950, I was on the Mahim Causeway, Bombay City, with Horace Alexander and Salim Ali, watching a lot of Little Cormorants, Black- and Brown-headed Gulls, and Gull-billed Terns busily feeding on the edge of the mangrove swamp, with the tide flowing in. Among them we noticed a single Lesser Crested Tern (*T. benghalensis*), and another yet smaller tern, with sharp contrasts of dark and white in its plumage. Though at some distance from us, our binoculars clearly showed the pure white tail (almost square and typical of a marsh tern), sooty-grey upper parts, and black or blackish under-wing coverts. Thus the bird could not have been anything but the White-winged Black Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*) which, in spite of the statement in the Fauna, has not been recorded before from anywhere in peninsular India. The only records between the Persian Gulf and Tipperah (Bengal) are from Ceylon, where it is considered a winter visitor (Whistler, Avifauna of Ceylon, p. 268). The Handbook of British Birds says that it winters in